

- 5 Autodidacts Anonymous** **13**
Employees share information about what they have taught themselves in the past and what they plan to teach themselves in the future.

Part Two: A Great Place to Work

Activities to create a positive work environment

- 6 Good Enough** **17**
Employees explore the idea that sometimes it's OK to settle for "good enough" rather than to hold out for perfection.

- 7 Made to Order** **19**
Employees write their job descriptions in the style of a retail catalog.

- 8 Meeting Meddlers** **22**
During a meeting, some participants secretly play roles that help to make the meeting a positive experience for all.

- 9 See It and Believe It** **25**
Two effective visualization exercises encourage employees to maintain a positive self-image and to energetically work toward their goals.

- 10 Verbology** **28**
Employees use a list of powerful verbs to stimulate ideas about how their work makes a difference in people's lives.

Part Three: On the Same Team

Activities to foster collaboration and support

- 11 Common Values** **33**
Employees establish some guidelines for a positive and productive work environment.

- 12 Secret Buddies** **35**
Employees secretly observe one another, focusing on positive aspects of their "secret buddy's" character and work.

13 Testimonials

Employees capture the positive emotions and strong sense of accomplishment that they feel after working hard toward a goal.

14 Show and Tell

Employees each present a project they're currently working on and describe its value to the team, to the organization, and/or to customers.

15 Puzzle Masters

Employees work in two groups to complete a puzzle, and each group has to work under different constraints.

Part Four: Productivity Boosters

Activities to encourage higher productivity

16 The 10-Minute Solution

Employees come up with various ways to increase productivity by implementing a daily change.

17 Grid Luck

Employees work toward a goal and, once they've reached it, have a chance to try for a prize.

18 Nothing New

Employees enjoy a "catch-up" period in which they are able to turn away any new work.

19 Tell Me How to Treat You

Employees complete a questionnaire that managers can use to gain insights about how to reward employees for their success.

20 Priority Pie

Employees take an honest look at how they're really spending their time and energy at work, and then look at how they can be more productive and less stressed.

Part Five: Help Them Help You

Activities to help you delegate responsibilities and empower employees

21 Problem Solvers

This activity helps you to empower employees and transform them from problem reporters into problem solvers.

22 Information Relay

In this relay-style activity, employees each find a piece of information and then share the information, ultimately realizing that the sum is greater than the parts.

23 The Absolutes

Employees work together to determine what should and should not be done in the department and/or organization.

24 We Hold These Truths

Employees follow the lead of the Declaration of Independence by establishing that certain truths are “self-evident” and in the process empower and motivate themselves to go forward.

25 Here’s What I Would Do

Employees brainstorm creative ideas for serving their internal and external customers.

26 Brick by Brick

Through simulating the completion of some grand-scale projects, employees discover that every project—no matter how large—becomes manageable once it is broken down into smaller tasks.

Part Six: Out of the Clear Blue Sky

Activities to tap your employees’ creativity and innovation

27 Phictional Philanthropy

In this inspiring, thought-provoking activity, employees come up with ideas for their own fictional charity or nonprofit organization.

28 Job Aid Jamboree

Employees work in small groups to come up with job aids that will help the department or organization to work more efficiently.

29 Colors for Sale

Employees practice their presentation and persuasion skills by competing with one another to win over “buyers.”

30 All the News

Employees work together to create a mock-up newspaper that covers various aspects of the organization—in the future.

31 Never Been Played Before

Using a variety of common game items, employees work in small groups to invent entirely new games for their peers to play.

Part Seven: Knowing When to Follow

Activities to gain insights on leadership from your employees

32 Leadership Haiku

Participants come up with haiku poems to simply and concisely illustrate their perspectives on leadership.

33 Every Which Way to Lead

Employees brainstorm leadership qualities and then reveal which ones are most important to them.

34 Quotation Quest

Employees read partial quotes by famous leaders and try to come up with the missing words.

35 Remembering Greatness

Employees recall a favorite leader from their past—teacher, coach, mentor, or manager—and describe why that person left such a lasting and favorable impression on the employee.

Part Eight: What You Say and What You Don't

Activities to improve your team's verbal and nonverbal communication

36 Three-Way Communication

Through some fun experiential learning, employees determine key aspects of communication in the face-to-face, phone, and e-mail environments.

37 A Better Way to Say It

Employees practice some key skills for communication with coworkers when they are requesting help or information.

38 Attitude Charades

Employees act out various emotions without using any words, as the rest of the group guesses what is being communicated.

39 Nix the Negativity

Employees revise a series of negative statements in order to make them more positive and upbeat.

40 Five Seconds to a First Impression

Employees look at several pictures of individuals and then discuss what impressions they get in just five seconds.

Part Nine: Just for Fun

Activities to alleviate stress and increase fun in the workplace

41 Before the Sun Goes Down

In this quick, energizing activity, employees focus on one thing they have to look forward to before the end of the day.

42 Name Droppers

Working in small groups, employees use the letters of their names to come up with a range of words and phrases.

43 Job Titles in Jest

Employees have fun coming up with fictional job titles for themselves, using a variety of quirky and impressive words.

44 Humor in the Air

Employees share humorous anecdotes in a unique and surprising way.

45 Flip-Chart Frenzy

Employees quickly rotate to various stations where they offer serious and not-so-serious ideas for one another.

Part Ten: On Your Own

Solo activities for the leader to do

46 Walk the Talk

This two-part exercise helps managers translate intentions into actions. It's an effective on-your-own activity that uncovers important aspects of one's management style.

47 The Practice of Praise

This activity encourages the leader to regularly praise his or her employees and offers tips and techniques for making this a valuable, mutually rewarding experience.

48 Boss's Blueprint

The manager tests his or her own familiarity with the work environment and with the individualities of employees.

49 Me, Myself, and My Leadership

Leaders write their own (fictional) retirement party tribute, highlighting key aspects of their career and leadership style.

50 To Be or Not to Be

In this simple, illuminating exercise, leaders come up with two lists that help to guide their actions and philosophy as leaders.

Contents

Introduction

How to Use This Book

Part One: Getting to Know You

Activities to break the ice or warm the relationship with your employees

1 A Great Moment

Employees describe great moments in their personal or professional lives.

2 Alphabet Improv

Manager and employee have a spontaneous conversation by beginning each statement with a particular letter of the alphabet.

3 Emotional Review

Participants use a range of emotions as prompts to share information.

4 Facts of My Life

Participants have fun guessing which claims made by their peers are true and which are not.